

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 INR-10 MCE-00 ABF-01 OMB-01
TRSE-00 AID-05 ACDA-12 EB-08 SS-15 /068 W
-----035400 011131Z /17

P 010657Z JUNE 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8671
INFO SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 6729

SEC DEF FOR //ASD/ISA//

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS NI
SUBJECT: NIGERIAN REQUEST FOR P & B DATA

REF: LAGOS 5610

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY HAS CONTINUED EFFORTS TO DEVELOP MORE INFORMATION ON NIGERIAN ARMY REQUEST FOR P & B DATA FOR 155-MM SELF-PROPELLED HOWITZER AND 8-INCH SELF-PROPELLED HOWITZER. THIS CABLE PROVIDES ADDITIONAL DATA. END SUMMARY.

2. THIS REQUEST IS PART OF THE PLANNING EFFORT FOR THE NIGERIAN ARMY IN ITS BUDGET SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT. IT IS NOT A GOVERNMENT REQUEST. A HIGH PRIORITY FOR THE ARMY AT THIS TIME IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARMORED BRIGADE AND IT IS THEREFORE ONLY INTERESTED IN THE SELF-PROPELLED VERSION OF BOTH WEAPONS. AS A FOLLOW-ON THE ARMY PLANS TO SEEK APPROVAL FOR ACQUISITION OF TOWED ARTILLERY PIECES TO SUPPORT THE INFANTRY.

3. AS STATED REFTEL THE EMBASSY STRONGLY BELIEVES
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THAT THE USG SHOULD PROVIDE THE INFORMATION REQUESTED FOR THIS SALE. ALTHOUGH IN THE END THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT (FMG) MAY NOT PURCHASE THESE WEAPONS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO ENCOURAGE THE FMG TO LOOK TO THE U.S. FOR ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE AT THIS TIME WHEN IT EXPECTS TO SEE EVIDENCE THAT THE MUCH

PUBLICIZED IMPROVEMENT IN US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS HAS
REAL SUBSTANCE TO IT IN TERMS OF USG ATTITUDES. REFUSAL
TO PROVIDE DATA WOULD BE A STRONG REMINDER OF ONE OF THE
WORST PERIODS IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS--THE CIVIL
WAR--WHEN IN THE FMG'S EYES WE EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTED
THE REBEL BIAFRAN GOVERNMENT BY REFUSING TO SELL ARMS
TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. A DECISION TO DENY THE
DATA WOULD HAVE GREATEST IMPACT ON THE NIGERIAN MILITARY--
A KEY UNIFYING FORCE IN THE COUNTRY--AND COULD EASILY
BE MISINTERPRETED AS A DEMONSTRATION OF U.S. INSICERITY
IN PRAISING US-NIGERIAN TIES.
EASUM

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** ONLY
*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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